

**Mr. SCOTT of Virginia:** Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment offered by my friend and colleague from Virginia, Mr. CONNOLLY.

This amendment would prohibit offshore lease sales from going forward if those leases would interfere or impede the operations of the United States Armed Forces.

I represent the Hampton Roads region of Virginia, which is home to the world's largest Naval Base at Norfolk. Our Navy trains extensively off the coast of my state in the Virginia Capes Operations Area. A significant section of a proposed lease sale for drilling off Virginia's coast is within this important military training zone.

There are nearly 30 coastal naval installations in the United States and the Defense Department has expressed concerns that offshore oil and gas development could hinder the military's ability to train in many of these offshore areas.

I have long had reservations about drilling off the coast of Virginia. I believe the environmental, economic and national security risks for drilling off the coast of Virginia far outweigh any benefits. This amendment would simply ensure that offshore oil and gas development will not disrupt these vital functions to our national defense.

I urge my colleagues to support the Connolly Amendment.